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# USDA Inside USDA Information

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KEEP READING...

This week "Inside..." brings you an inside look at the tractorcade to Washington...a score for old Woodsy Owl...more people talk...and some odds and ends.

\* \* \*

As a result of the leadership of GPA's Karen Voight, protesting farmers arrived in Washington this year to be greeted with an array of group meetings, films, and individual appointments.

There were even overnight guests in the offices of Ed Goodpaster and Hal Taylor, although Karen won't admit to planning that.

Karen did set up meetings though on nitrites and pesticide residues; international trade and the world situation; meat imports and the cattle situation; conservation; FmHA and Federal crop insurance programs; farm programs on sugar, cotton grading, feed grains, and peanuts; transportation and energy, marketing orders, and an orientation about USDA in general.

She also reserved the department's auditorium for afternoon showings of films and slides on various subjects, set up a reception room where farmers could arrange individual appointments, and provided a guide to the maze of corridors in the USDA complex.

\* \* \*

Coverage of the big farm implement show on the mall has been extensive, both on the East Coast and across the country. Despite the tendency to elaborate on all confrontations and to expound pro and con editorially, much of the press has included articles that provide background many of us have tried to get used for years.

For instance, a few items we've noted in particular include: the Wall Street Journal...chances for new farm legislation, explanations of programs scheduled to expire this year...food stamps, federal crop insurance, milk and sugar price supports. Commodity News Service...exports and how they would be influenced by raised price supports. New York Times...how other farm issues relate to the overall problem. Philadelphia Inquirer...a defense of farmers in general. New York Daily News...the economic squeeze farmers undergo. The networks too have given extensive coverage.

So, regardless of whether we're "for 'em or agin 'em," agriculture is back on page 1 again.

\* \* \*

Reserve

NOTES ON THE BIG  
IMPLEMENT SHOW  
ON THE MALL

Del Dahl, Univ. of Ill., called to tell us of an opening he will have soon.

Chuck Hardwick soon will leave Illinois to go with the Soybean Digest. So Del is recruiting.

ANYONE FOR ILLINOIS?

He says he needs a "departmental editor type." That refers to the Illinois approach to having people assigned to handle information for the various academic departments.

Del hopes for applicants who have a B.S., preferably in agricultural journalism, with at least 3 years experience, who can write but also think and plan multi-media support programs for extension programs, who will be a media contact, and who will have interest and abilities in communication training.

Deadline for application is March 15. Send resumes to Del by that time. He hopes to fill the job by April 21. (His address: College of Agriculture, Univ. of Ill., Urbana 61801.)

\* \* \*

LET US COUNT  
THE WAYS...

Southerners gathered in New Orleans last week for the Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists. In the communication section, we saw folks from Texas, Alabama, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, and, of course, Louisiana...no doubt we missed a number of others unfortunately. Vince Marcley, SEA-AR, was chairman of the comm. sessions.

GPA's Jim Webster sent a talk entitled "Research, Results, and Real Life." One phrase suggested that "to some extent, we (are) victims of our successes."

Webster also said "Many times scientists, administrators, and program officers fail to understand the usefulness of their communicators and fail to use them to best advantage...that communicators, in many instances, either are being ignored or are not being forceful enough with administrators or scientists."

All that led to the remark that "Scientists, administrators, and communicators have not been sensitive enough to the demands of the public...that lack of communication with the public may be a major reason why the public's confidence in agricultural research and support for funding may be waning."

Before you jump to conclusions, he also said, "Communicators, especially, need to take a stronger role." Now...if you want a copy of the talk, write to yee olde editor of "Inside..." who had to deliver Jim's speech.

\* \* \*

NICE KNOWING YOU...

(Kill us if you will...but we can't resist an editorial question: When, pray tell, will we as information folks stop seeking administrators who can tell us what we should be doing and reverse things...bring some administrators around where

information folks tell them what they ought to be doing? Well, it was a fun question to ask anyhow!)

\* \* \*

Woodsy Owl will soon be part of English education for thousands of sixth graders.

WOODSY GOES  
TO SCHOOL

Wayne "Nick" Nicolls, FS, showed us a new textbook the other day called "Good English, Purple Book," with a three page section on advertising. It cites Woodsy Owl as a public service campaign example used to combat problems.

The publisher, Laidlaw Brothers, a division of Doubleday, expects to sell about 150,000 copies per year for the life of the series ...usually 6 years.

Yes, we asked about that Purple Book situation. Seems as though sixth graders are highly organized. A color designation indicates a category of expertise or a grade designation. Probably only the kids know which is better...red, purple, green, or what have you. Maybe Woodsy knows.

\* \* \*

And George Castillo, FS, sent us news of two new information staffers.

NEWCOMERS IN FS

Wally T. Shiverdecker has joined FS as radio/television officer. Wally came from the Boise and Payette National Forests in southwest Idaho where he was Zone PIO. He's a graduate of Utah State U.

Jay B. Humphreys was an info. specialist with the Geological Survey, the George G. Sharp Corp., and the Congressional Info. Service. He's joined FS in the press and internal communication section. Jay is a graduate of West Va. Univ.

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CONFLAB FOLLOWS  
CONFLAB

Right after the Southern Assoc. of Ag. Scientists meeting, folks from Dallas, San Francisco, Chicago, and Atlanta met to discuss USDA regional info. office ideas and possibilities. (That means Harold Bryson, Ben Darling, Herb Jackson, and Connie Crunkleton, respectively.)

In attendance were four of the task force members planning the new operation...Stan Prochaska, Marilee Menard, Stan Weston, and Hal Taylor. Also present were Sebastian "Flip" Filippone, P&S; Al Horton, FGIS; Bob Norton, FSQS; King Lovinger, APHIS; and Nancy Bevis, AMS.

The meeting provided a good preview of things the task force will have to face as it comes up with recommendations...settling questions relating to regional/national interest releases, concerns over coverage of all USDA programs, possible staffing patterns, methods for coupling radio services, mailing list coordination, relations with cooperative groups such as the land-grant colleges and the state departments of agriculture.

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A HEXAWHAT?

What's a hexaflexagraph? Well, we wondered too when we were brainstorming ideas for a gimmick that might show where the various costs lie in different kinds of foods.

Too long ago, Charles Voyles, Okla. State Univ., set a meeting on fire with a hexaflexagraph--an octagonal fold of a long narrow sheet of paper. Assembled properly, it literally turns itself inside and out, revealing about 19-20 spaces for different messages.

We called Charlie to see if he still had instructions for making one. He did and sent us one. Now, if we can find a printer not already suffering from burnout and willing to take a chance, we're going to see if we can produce a few to send around to you and others. Keep tuned.

\* \* \*

Ben Blankenship, ESCS, reminds us that Farmer Newsletters are a year old. If that sounds odd to you, remember we're talking about the direct mail pieces Congress told ESCS to develop for farmers...gave ESCS a special appropriation to get the job done.

Martin Schubkegel ramrods the effort largely...sees that it's easy to read and that content arrives on time and on a pertinent subject. Subscribers moved from zero to more than 110,000 a year. Call (202) 447-4230 for a copy.

\* \* \*

More top staff travel hopes include:

Apr 3--Asst. Sec. Carol Foreman, American Society for Public Administration, Baltimore.

Apr 20--Asst. Sec. Dale Hathaway, Food Day, Columbus, Ohio.

Apr 24--Asst. Sec. Rupert Cutler, Conference on Our National Landscape, Incline, Nevada.

Apr 24--Asst. Sec. Carol Foreman, Spring Session of Research and Development Assoc., New York City.

May 3-4--Asst. Sec. Carol Foreman, Nutrition Conference Teachers College, New York City.

May 15-17--Asst. Sec. Rupert Cutler, Coop. Forestry Research Advisory Committee meeting, St. Paul, Minn.

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Late word just received has it that Nelson Fitton, GPA's chief of publications, has just been elected president of the Washington chapter of the National Assoc. of Government Communicators. Congrat's (or sympathies) are in order no doubt.

The NAGC is a relatively new outfit...formed a couple of years ago from the Govt. Info. Organization and the Federal Editors' Assoc. Both were local groups. NAGC is national now.

Five chapters already are active. The D.C. group has the largest membership followed by groups in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Tidewater, Va., and Philadelphia/Delaware Valley. Six new chapters are being organized...Portland, Ore.; Seattle, Baltimore, New York City, Chattanooga, Tenn., and Boston.

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